

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. GLASS' SPEECH.

OTTAWA, Oct. 28, 1873.

MR. GLASS, (East Middlesex, Ontario) said—While this question is before the House under the consideration of hon. members, I wish to make known some reasons for the course pursued by me on the 15th Aug. last, and also to point out briefly what I believe to be the duty of the hour. On the 2nd of April, when charges were made by the hon. member for Shefford against ministers, it was intimated that there were no substantial grounds for making them, and therefore, that Ministerial supporters should view them as an expression of want of confidence and vote them down. This was done with a fidelity not soon to be forgotten by hon. members, and an earnestness which showed the trust Government supporters had in their leaders; on the eighth day of the same month, the Right Hon. the first Minister in his place in Parliament, moved and caused to be carried a resolution appointing five hon. gentlemen, prominent members, to act as a committee for the investigation of the charges made by the hon. member for Shefford. Ministers were supported by a majority of thirty, and therefore as a reflection of the house, the Committee of five was composed of a majority in favor of the Government, viz: three supporters against two opposititionists. This was not the result of chance, but of careful deliberation, the members being selected with a view to each party having as near as could be their relative strength in the house represented upon the Committee. The house by that act revealed its will, made known its wishes, declared the deliberate result of its judgment, viz: that the Court then constituted to investigate and partially pronounce upon the charges should not be wholly composed of those predisposed for or against the accused; but should be so composed that at all events full opportunity would be offered to eliminate every portion of the evidence and prevent to a certainty the perpetration of any wrong. The Committee was the offspring of the House of Commons. It was created for and concerning a matter brought before this house, a matter not brought before or submitted to any other authority, tribunal or Court, and

therefore cognizable by this house and by this house alone. (Cheers.) The Committee was so strong in numbers in favour of the Government that Ministers should have had nothing to fear by allowing it to proceed, vigorously with its labors. (Cheers.)

The charges were of such a nature as to directly or indirectly implicate every supporter of the Government in the House, and therefore, to subject the votes and acts of hon. gentlemen to a wrong, or even a false interpretation, every act, every vote was pointed to as the result of some interested motive, hence the greater reason for promptness in the rendition of the proofs with a view not to a preliminary, not a partial, but a complete expurgation of matters which had apparently taken such deep hold upon the public mind. The subject was one not only of importance to the individual members of this House, but of the utmost importance to Canada. Important, sir, because of the great interests involved, interests which seemed to jeopardise the social, political and financial hopes of the Dominion. Therefore, when the subject was brought before the House and Country, it created a sensation throughout every city, town and hamlet from St. John on the Atlantic to Victoria, away over on the Pacific, a sensation which partook not of excitement but of solemn wonder. Wonder at the enormity of the charge and solemn because of the consequences which must follow if the charge could in any degree be sustained by evidence. (Hear, hear.) Those who were wont to believe ill of the Government fell readily into the belief that the charges were true, while the supporters of the Government stoutly denied the truthfulness of them. With this in view and to this end every motion on the subject was carried strongly in favor of the Government. Never was there a more generous, loyal, honest support given to a Government in order to maintain the reputation of ministers before the country; and further, to give unmistakable evidence that the spirit of generous dealing with the accused dwelt as surely in the British heart here as in any other part of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) The charge was a grave one

and therefore, the greater necessity for some time to be given to prepare for the defence. That time was given not sluggishly, not grudgingly, but heartily, in order that the Government and their supporters might be completely vindicated before the country. (Hear, hear.) During the discussion of the subject several times it was suggested by the first Minister that he would have no objection to a Royal Commission. That suggestion was not seconded by any hon. member, and, therefore, the fair inference to be drawn was that the House was not favorable to the appointment or such a Commission, for the very obvious reason that the Commissioners would owe their legal life and management to the persons accused, which appeared to be repugnant to the fundamental principles of natural justice. (Cheers.) And therefore the appointment of a Commission received no favor from hon. members on either side of the House. No one for a moment presumed to deny the supremacy of the House, supreme above Governments, supreme above Governors, and, in the Mother Country, supreme above the throne itself, which had been more than half a score of times since the days of William the Norman, regulated, limited, settled and controlled by the Commons House of England. Therefore I was of opinion that when this House, the prototype of the greatest deliberative body in the world, gave indication of its wish, that wish could not be disregarded without constituting an evil precedent dangerous to the public safety and to the future liberties of the people, for whatever curtailments or infringements take place in regard to the rights of this House, that is in fact a curtailment or infringement upon the rights of the people, for it is through this House that the voice of the people can be heard, (Loud applause) and through this House alone. It may be said that there was no definite action taken adverse to the appointment of a Commission. True, nor was there any definite action taken adverse to the case being examined by an ordinary magistrate, but the creation of such a Commission was frequently suggested and never in any degree supported, and therefore the fair presumption was, and is, that it was not wanted.

This all took place prior to the adjournment of the House in May, and is adverted to, in order to show, amongst other things, why fourteen supporters of the Government acted as they did in August. Some time prior to the adjournment of the House in May, it was alleged that, when that adjournment took place, it should be until the 13th August following; that then the House would meet "*pro forma*" to receive the report of the Committee; but that the members need not be present—just the Speaker and the Clerk to receive the report. This, I apprehend, must have been an error, as even the reception of the report could not take place without a "*Quorum*" of members being present. And if a quorum were present, then that would constitute a house, and being a house, would be master of its own acts; and being master of its own acts, its dispersal would not be at all likely to take place without its consent. Will it be seriously pretended that the mere statement of the Right Hon. the Leader of the

Government, that the House would meet "*pro forma*," on the 13th August, to receive the report, and then be prorogued was sufficient? Will this be accepted as the final action of the Commons of Canada? Will it be pretended that by that statement the minds of the Crown, the thirteen members of the Government the Senate Chamber and the whole House of Commons would be locked up, their tongues paralysed and their hands tied. If it is pretended that all persons in authority would be powerless for action on the 13th of August, because of the interpretation put upon the statement of the first Minister, I cannot but think it to be false, a forced and unjust interpretation. (Cheers.) Only one state of facts could justify in any degree a literal carrying out of that statement. That one state of facts if it had occurred, would have been that the committee after receiving all the evidence would have reported that charges against Ministers were wholly without foundation. In fact upon this report, if well founded, discussion perhaps would not have taken place. This may be the case, the first Minister had in his mind when he made the statement. But for a moment take the converse of this case. Suppose the whole evidence had been received by the committee, by the force of it however reluctantly they had been compelled to report adverse to the Government and to confirm all the charges made against it, will it be pretended that the Government itself would have wished to remain in office to the following year, and that the people's representatives in the Commons should have been peremptorily sent away from the Capital to their homes, there with their constituents to brood over the conspicuous feebleness of the Constitution? to have heaved up upon the surface of society a glaring wrong without any adequate means of removing it, a wrong against the dignity of the Crown, a wrong against the two branches of the legislature, and a violent and wicked wrong against the great mass of Her Majesty's liege subjects in this Dominion, a wanton and deep injustice to every estate of the Realm. (Cheers.) In this sense it was not, never could have been intended by the first Minister when he made the statement in the House. (Hear, hear.)

But it is now said that in an exigency of this nature, some executive authority would have stepped in and prevented so great an injustice, would have taken immediate steps on that very 13th of August to obtain the opinion of the Commons on a subject of so much importance to its members and to the country. I well believe this would have been the case, that the Commons would have been invoked and its heartfelt advice at once accepted. Believing this, and knowing well the soundness of such a procedure, knowing also that the whole press of the country, whether for the Government or against it, declared boldly that the 13th of August should not be allowed to pass without action, or if necessary having a further adjournment in order to obtain a full house to give fresh instructions to the Committee which had previously been paralysed in its action owing to the miscarriage of the "*Oaths Bill*," it was fair to suppose that the miscarriage of that Bill was as important

an exigency as could have arisen if the Committee had reported the condemnation of the Government, and should have been as certainly and as speedily acted upon. (Cheers.) Then we say, believing this, was it to be wondered at that the fourteen who had prior to that time awarded a generous support to the Government, should have availed themselves of the opportunity offered of signing a memorial to His Excellency the Governor-General, praying His Excellency not to allow the session of Parliament then sitting to be prorogued until it would have an opportunity of taking such steps as in its judgment might be proper to purge itself from the charges against it, to throw off the cloud then like a funeral pall resting upon its name? (Cheers.) For it was not in fact a charge against the Government alone, but against the House of Commons itself, a majority of whose members were personally implicated in the general prostitution of the country to the power of money. These fourteen men were not needy, crafty politicians, whose well being depended upon the smiles or frowns of any government. Speaking for myself, I can say, that during the twelve years I have given a constant and unwavering support to the coalition governments that have existed during that time, I have never asked for a personal favor, and therefore have never been refused anything. Certainly these fourteen members are greatly wronged by that part of the public press which charges them with having some personal purpose to serve. For my own part I entirely disclaim anything of the sort, and challenge the government, as I also do the *opposition*, to point out where, in any degree, I have been moved to my present action by interested motives. (Cheers.) I have no doubt the other hon. members acted from equally disinterested motives. I take this opportunity of saying that while the press—free and enlightened as it is, while that press—the great tower of civil liberty—has cheerfully acceded to it all reasonable and sometimes unreasonable latitude, and claims to have accredited to it honesty of purpose, should award the same freedom and honesty of purpose to others. Some of the leading journals have acted fairly upon this principle, but the bulk of the Ministerial papers in Ontario has acted most unfairly, if not in publishing their own editorials, in reproducing remarks of Opposition journals, published in 1872 in the heat of an election contest, as though opinions then expressed had anything whatever to do with the issues now before the House and country. (Hear, hear.) Those who exercised an honest discretion on the thirteenth of August have had coarse epithets heaped upon them. They have been held up to the ridicule of their constituents; they have been charged for signing a paper couched in the most respectful terms, with being "Traitors," "Betrayers of Confidence," "Paltry Fools," "Deserters." These are samples of the choice epithets hurled into the faces of those who, in the discharge of their public duties, have thought proper not to insult any one in authority, not to condemn any one charged, not to pronounce any opinion upon the subject of the matter for investigation. No! they did

not think proper to do any of these things, but they did think proper notwithstanding the terrors of the press to employ their own minds, to exercise their own judgments; they felt that as Canadians, as denizens of this young Dominion, neither the frowns of Ministers or the terrors of the press should deter them from what they believed to be an independent discharge of duty. (Loud cheers.)

But, Mr. Speaker, we were told that the House could not proceed to business on the 13th August, because the Hon. Member for the City and County of St. John could not be, and in fact would not be, present, and therefore the business of the country must stop. This was a little awkward for the country, but no matter; the Hon. Member had put his foot down, and when he did, this was not to be despised even physically, but much more so when looked at morally and politically. The reason for this dead lock in the national affairs is stated by the Hon. Member in a letter to the press, in which he alleges that he perfectly understood it; and in fact it was perfectly understood at the time of the adjournment in May, that the meeting in August would be a *pro forma* one, and that he and others left the capital relying upon this. Now, after such a letter, the country will be much surprised to know that the hon. member had not been at Ottawa at all for some time prior to the adjournment of the House in May. That several days prior to the discussion of the matter of adjournment on the 22nd of May, he (the hon. member) had hid himself away from the halls of the Legislature, and when that question was under consideration, no doubt his stately form might have been seen laying itself in the Bay of Fundy, (great laughter and cheers) or perhaps with his usually softened visage he might have had his mind bent upon how the great tides would ultimately effect the Bay Verte Canal. (Laughter and cheers.) But certainly I know of my own personal knowledge that when that question of adjournment came on, the hon. member was not in the House and had not been for several days before. But, Mr. Speaker, if it were true that the adjournment in May was upon the understanding that the meeting in August should be merely to receive the report of the Committee, when as early as the 3rd July it was found that no satisfactory report could or would be made to the House in August, considering the gravity of the charges, the number of persons implicated, and the credit of the country, I maintain that it was the duty of Ministers not to allow August to pass without having adopted such means as would secure a full meeting of the house. (Hear, hear.) But it is replied that the house or the Committee could not examine witnesses on oath. This I do not believe to be true. I believe means could have been adopted to examine the witnesses on oath; but whether or not, this is a subject to which no power out of the House of Commons has a right to speak, and until this house declares its incompetency, interference with its prerogative and especial functions should be deprecated by all and by none more severely than by those who for the time being are the sworn ministers of the Crown,

the pledged protectors of the sacred rights of the people. (Great cheers.) Therefore, the question of whether an oath could be administered or not, should never be submitted to the opinion of a cotery of hon. members, whether ministers or private members, who may themselves be deeply interested in the matter at issue. But as against those who signed the members' memorial to the Governor, it is broadly alleged the adjournment in May was upon the agreement that the meeting in August should be merely *pro forma* to receive the report of the Committee and then prorogue. This I dissent from. In proof of my opinion, when the Committee met at Montreal on the 2nd July, and it was found that the Oaths Bill had been disallowed, what was the first thought and action of the Government supporters on the Committee? It was to declare and put on record a formal resolution that that Committee should come back to Parliament on the 13th August for fresh instructions. That resolution was carried by the votes of the Hon. John H. Cameron, the Hon. James McDonald and the Hon. Mr. Blanchet, all the supporters of the Government casting their votes in a solid block in favor of coming back to Parliament on the 13th August for further authority. (The hon. gentleman then read the resolution.) Now, certainly these gentlemen on the Committee were not of opinion that no action could be taken in August, or they certainly never would so far have stultified themselves as to have placed on record a resolution pointing to that day at Ottawa as being the time and place when they could alone receive fresh life and authority. (Hear, hear.) On the third day of July the Committee were unanimously of opinion that it would be highly indecorous to the House to allow any interference with the Committee to take place excepting by the House itself. And that a Royal Commission appointed by Government would not give satisfaction to the House and the country. (Mr. Glass here read the report of the meeting of Committee.)

It is therefore quite clear that when the Committee adjourned at Montreal on the 3rd of July to meet at Ottawa on the 13th August following, it was the full intention to come back to Parliament on that day for other and more complete directions. Part of committee was in favor of going on with the reception of the evidence without an oath, as had been done in Great Britain and Canada for a hundred years before, but the majority of the committee, the three Government supporters I have named, carried the resolution to adjourn to the 13th August at Ottawa. No one will deny that these hon. gentlemen were quite sincere in that resolution. They put it on record. They gave it to the world as their official act at a time when all eyes were upon them, when the country without distinctions of party stood up for the right, all former prejudices being swept away in the general desire for a common purification. To fortify and materially strengthen the position taken by them they had the encouragement and support of the whole Ministerial press, all quoting the resolution, and pointing to the 13th August as the time when the House would meet, and asking for a sus-

pension of judgment until that time. — But did they, according to their resolve on the 3rd of July, come before the House on the 13th of August? Did they ask for fresh instructions? Were they here to fulfil their promise made a few weeks previously? A promise made to me, to every member of this House, to the country generally. No, they were not here; there was no report here, there was no hon. member here to stand forward and explain to the House the action of the Committee and to ask for further directions. But, Sir, there were fourteen members present on that 13th day of August, who had heretofore acted with the majority of that Committee, and because these fourteen respectfully asked that the pledge of this Committee, the pledge of the public press, the dictates of reason and justice, should be fulfilled, they must be branded as mere *fools*, as *traitors* and *deceivers*. But, Sir, I for one am quite willing to allow my fellow-countrymen to be the judges of where the deception is to be found. (Cheers.) Talk of Liberal Conservatism! talk of the supporters of coalition governments! Where is the Liberalism? Let us see a little more of practical results of it than has found its way into the public press for the last few weeks. By some of the unthinking of my constituents I have been upbraided, and even coarsely insulted, because I thought proper to use my own judgment in this matter. Since my return from Ottawa in August last, my answer invariably has been that none of those who were loud in making complaints would be called upon to assume any portion of the responsibility of my conduct; that while I was proud of being their representative in Parliament, I thought still more highly of my own self-respect (applause), that my seat was at their disposal at any moment, for I would not remain in Parliament one hour longer than I could be permitted to exercise a free, untrammelled judgment upon every point upon which I might be called on to vote. (Hear, hear.)

I have shown that, on the 3rd of July, when the Committee adjourned, it was upon the express agreement that it would come back to the fountain of its authority on the 13th of the month following. Up to that time no evidence had appeared as to the nature of the charges; but, sir, on the very day after, viz., the 4th of July, the country was startled by developments then hurried into public notice. A sheaf of letters, written by Sir Hugh Allan, was given to the press. The letters developed an astounding state of immorality. The whole country was panic-stricken; people looked at each other in silent amazement; all the friends of Government, after recovering their balance, settled down into the opinion that the letters were false, gotten up for the occasion. But, sir, the suspense was not long; the next blow was more severe. The very next day after the publication of the letters, Sir Hugh himself came out over his own signature and under the solemnity of an oath, with some slight discrepancies, declared the whole of the letters to be true. He swore that in the autumn of 1871 he obtained from Sir Francis Hincks the names of McMullen and Smith, and opened negotiations with them with a view

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to form a company for the construction of the Pacific Railway, and entered into an agreement with them for that purpose. He swears that on the 26th July, 1872, Sir George Cartier showed him a telegram from the first Minister, in which Sir Hugh was promised the presidency of the Pacific Railway. He swears that members who had shewn themselves favourable to the enterprise were assisted by him at the elections. He swears that in these ways he expended nearly \$350,000. He states that Sir Francis Hincks for the government, had at first alleged that the contract should be let by tender, but that that idea had been abandoned, and that in consideration of the pressure brought to bear on the government, he had brought them to his terms. He states that on the question of money, his American friends would have to "go it blind," that he could get no vouchers for the money paid out by him. He states that McMullen was desirous of securing the inferior members of the government. And that he McMullen entered into engagements for that purpose, which he Sir Hugh did not approve of, as he thought this a "waste of powder and shot." He stated that the French faction, as he calls them, had kept the entire Government in office for five years. He stated that in a short time, through the free use of money, he controlled twenty-seven members of Parliament, which compelled the Government to give him the contract with all the advantages the Act of Parliament can confer. He states finally, as late as the 14th Sept., 1872, after the elections were all over, to his dear friend McMullen, that he had paid out \$343,000 with \$13,500 more to pay. This is the way matters stood on the fourth day of July last, after the publication of the letters and the making of the affidavit of the now somewhat renowned Knight of Ravenscraig. Yes, this was the position of affairs from the fourth day of July up to the morning of the 18th of the same month, when George W. McMullen, the dear friend of Sir Hugh Allan, published what he declared to be an authentic history of the whole transaction, which narrative he alleged he was prepared to prove.

Before proceeding further, allow me to ask who is this George W. McMullen? I have never spoken to him. The press seems much divided upon his good qualities. One thing we do know,—a matter upon which all agree—that in March, 1871, he with others, constituting a deputation from Chicago, visited Ottawa in the matter of the enlargement of the Canals. He was therefore introduced at our Capital under favourable auspices. He was one of a delegation from Chicago, the great Queen City of the West, the purposes of that deputation being to confer substantial benefits upon Canada by settling upon some united action for the enlargement of the Canals. Chicago, the proud, ambitious, commercial centre with its 200,000 people, constituted McMullen one of its representatives for the performance of this very delicate business. I know nothing personally of the man, but certainly his coming amongst us was at a time and under circumstances calculated to inspire respect. He had been introduced to Sir Hugh Allan by Sir Francis Hincks, Finance Minister

of the Dominion of Canada. He became the bosom friend of Sir Hugh. (Hear, hear.) He was therefore the accepted friend of some members of our Government, the ally and partner of American capitalists, representing over one hundred millions of dollars. Then looking at McMullen, surrounded by this blaze of recommendation, fortified by this triple row of knights and honorable men, (cheers) petted, flattered and called affectionate names by the great mogul of Ravenscraig, (great cheers and laughter) always being addressed as "my dear McMullen"—even up to this time they have in no way parted friendship. I say then looking at McMullen arrayed by these surroundings, borne up by the great power of gold and by the less strong but often courted tinseling which the possession of empty titles afford. Who can doubt his respectability? Who amongst us will presume to cast a reproach upon the representative of the knighthood and the wealth of the two nations. (Great cheers.) But, sir, I see, in face of this, a portion of the press characterizing him as a Yankee speculator, one of a Yankee ring. Can this be set up as a reason why he should not be fairly dealt with by us? No, sir, this is no reason, it is an attempted pandering to the bigot, a low and dishonorable appeal which I declare here on the floor of this House will meet with no favor from the right-thinking of our people. Who has the right to hold cheap the law of hospitality and even handed justice because one of the parties concerned happens to hold allegiance to a foreign country. But, sir, he has been apostrophised in terms of the strongest indignation, and his nationality paraded as a reason for his condemnation. I believe, Sir, I speak the true feeling of this House when I say that such a gross injustice does not, and never can, meet with any favor from this representative body or from any class of our people whose opinions carry weight at all in the country. (Cheers.) We never wish to overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our most wealthy citizens, employing millions of capital, were at one time citizens of the great Republic to the South of us, and, therefore, any attempt to draw distinctions in nationality should be frowned down as tending to bigotry and exclusiveness, which a young and sparsely settled country like Canada should be the last to encourage. (Loud cheers.) On the 18th of July last Sir Mr. McMullen brought his detailed narrative before the public. He showed by vouchers that \$30,000 had been drawn by the Government from Sir Hugh for election purposes, and the vouchers being apparently supplementary, the inference seemed irresistible that about double that amount had been so drawn from the same source, not from any general fund, not from any committee, but from Sir Hugh, and that \$25,000 more had been paid to the Hon. the Minister of Militia, with various other details as to the inception, progress and the termination of his connection with Sir Hugh and the Government. The main features of his narrative were and are corroborated by Senator Foster, therefore the force of Mr. McMullen's narrative depends much upon the credibility of Senator Foster. I find that he was elected to

Parliament in 1858, and afterwards elected to the Legislative Council, and that as a conservative friend of Sir G. Cartier he was by Royal Proclamation called to the Senate in 1867. In addition to this, he appears to have filled many offices of trust and responsibility. Therefore it is fair to assume that he is a man of probity and honour; as such, his confirmation of McMullen's narrative is very material indeed. That narrative saw the light on the 18th July, nearly four weeks prior to the 13th August, to which time Parliament had adjourned. And, therefore, even then, there was abundance of time to have had a full meeting of the House, if Government had so wished it; but from some strange, mysterious cause, utterly inexplicable, the developments seemed rather to retard the meeting of the House than to hurry forward its assembling. Well, sir, the 13th of August came, and with it the peculiar excitement attendant upon uncertainty in matters of much moment. On the morning of that day ninety-six members of the House ventured to approach His Excellency by petition. The whole ministerial press at once sounded loud in its denunciation of those who had thus presumed to approach the Throne. Not so, however, with the distinguished statesman who fills the Vice-Royal chair. He at once acknowledged the right of the petitioners, received their deputation with the consideration due to their important mission, and deeply regretted that, under the peculiar circumstances, he was unable to comply with the wishes of the memorialists. This, abstractedly, was no doubt the real sentiment of the high-minded nobleman, who has ever held the scale of justice between parties with an even hand. But, sir, the official reply to that memorial which appeared the following day was not the act of the Crown, but of the responsible advisers of the Crown. I make this statement with a view to partially correct a popular fallacy which has gone abroad that the official reply to the members' memorial was the Act of the Sovereign's Representative personally. I regret to say that this fallacious idea has been greatly abetted through the press of the country; this has been done in face of the fact that it is absolutely contrary to the constitution, for the Sovereign to act in any case without a responsible adviser, as in supposition of law, (and in fact) the Sovereign is never without, and is unable to act except by and under the advice of a responsible Minister. These questions are well settled, and therefore, the reply to the members' memorial being the act of Ministers responsible to this House, it will devolve upon them to defend the course they followed, to explain why the judicial functions of this court having been invoked, called into operation on the 8th of April last by the unanimous vote of the whole body of members, should have been superseded on the 13th of August at the mere caprice of ministers.

As one of the memorialists I take this, the first opportunity, of drawing attention to the portions of the reply which appear to me unsound in argument and unwarranted by the terms of the memorial. Those who acted as I did say, that Ministers having from the current of events full warning, should have taken

such steps as would have rendered the memorial unnecessary and the embarrassment of His Excellency uncalled for. But it is said when the House adjourned in May, it was upon an agreement that the meeting in August should be a mere matter of form. I was never absent from Ottawa one hour from the opening of the session till the close of it; no such agreement was made in this House; no agreement can be made by one person. It requires at least two consenting parties to make an agreement. I was present and know the statement made by the first minister. That was only a statement. With just as much force and authority he could have made another statement that circumstances had arisen which required that the meeting in August should have been one for the despatch of business. (Hear, hear.) That these circumstances had arisen there can be no doubt, for it is so stated in the reply to the members' memorial. When the memorial was signed it was with a full belief that Ministers would take some steps whereby a further adjournment of the House would take place, in order to have a full meeting of members.

Another quite untrue statement has been circulated by some of the press, thinking that they are acting in the interest of the government, viz.: that these fourteen men jeopardised the government in that if an adjournment had been agreed to, the opposition would have moved and carried a vote of "want of confidence." I may here state that when that memorial was signed, it was upon the express understanding that as the House then stood, no vote in any way adverse to government would be proposed, that an adjournment long enough for a full House to assemble was all that was required. (Hear, hear.) The meeting of the 13th of August will for all time supply a singular page in the history of this country, a page that in my judgment will never be repeated. The future would be oppressive to look forward to, if in the distance we could discern such scenes in store for ourselves or our children, scenes strange to behold in any country or at any time, but superlatively strange for a young, vigorous, fresh country like the Dominion of Canada. On that day the Session of Parliament suffered a violent death, upon its grave rose a new authority, to make room for which the session had been killed; the new authority presumed to inherit the rights and privileges of the dead Parliament, without any bequest having been made in its favour. For that undue assumption of power the new authority is now placed upon its trial. (Cheers.) He who cares to bow himself down and submit to the dictates of this new authority interfering with the people in Parliament assembled, can now have an opportunity of doing so, can now and forever establish a precedent which strikes a blow at the very root of free government. (Hear, hear.) It is for this House to say how, when and by what means the remedy is to be supplied, without attempting to be harsh or oppressive to Ministers, yet holding the scale of justice with such an even hand as to maintain the dignity of the Assembly and the respect of the country. The accused are entitled to receive from their opponents the

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benefit of every doubt and even more, if possible, from their friends. By a beneficent provision of British justice all men are considered innocent until their guilt is proven. This presumption of innocence is like all other legal presumptions, so strong as to require positive evidence to displace it, and it will be for this House to say when the evidence is strong

enough to dispel that presumption of innocence. (Hear, hear.) I say in presence of this House, of my country, that presumption is removed. Then let all who would stand in the pathway of the country's honor be removed rather than that the honor of the country should be removed. (Hear, hear, and continued applause.)